

Faith and Order

Paper no. 48

Minutes

of the Meeting

of the

Working Committee

1966 Zagorsk

COMMISSION ON FAITH AND ORDER

World Council

of Churches

Geneva 1967

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COMMISSION ON FAITH AND ORDER

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
WORKING COMMITTEE

held at the
Lavra of St. Sergius, Zagorsk, USSR
27 August — 1 September, 1966

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World Council of Churches
COMMISSION ON FAITH AND ORDER
Geneva, 1967

WORKING COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Faith and Order Working Committee met from August 27th to September 1st, 1966, at the Lavra of St. Sergius, Zagorsk, USSR. During the course of the meeting members and staff assisted at the liturgical celebrations of the Feast of the Dormition of the Virgin, and were guests at receptions tendered by the Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy, Bishop Philaret, and the Abbot of the Lavra of St. Sergius, Archimandrite Platon.

Attendance

The following were present :

Officer : The Rt. Rev. O. S. TOMKINS, Bishop of Bristol, *Chairman*

Members : Principal L. G. CHAMPION
Professor N. CHITESCU
The Rev. R. E. DAVIES
Generalsuperintendent Dr. G. JACOB
Professor J. D. MCCAUGHEY
The Rev. J. MIGUEZ BONINO
Professor J. R. NELSON
Professor A. C. OUTLER
Professor P. E. PERSSON
Bishop K. SARKISSIAN
Professor H. A. E. SAWYERR
Professor J. A. SITTLER
Professor J. E. SKOGLUND
Professor K. E. SKYDSGAARD
Dr. J. SMOLIK
Dr. T. M. TAYLOR

Proxies : Professor M. BOUTTIER (for Professor MEHL)
The Rev. W. A. NORGREN (for Professor MINEAR)
Dr. R. SLENCZKA (for Professor SCHLINK)

Staff : Archpriest V. BOROVOI
The Rev. R. GROSCURTH
Dr. M. B. HANDSPICKER
Dr. L. VISCHER

Minute Secretaries : Miss WENDY BAYLISS
Miss ELLY GROENENDIJK
Miss RENATE HENNING

Guests : Bishop PITIRIM NETCHAEV
Bishop VLADIMIR SABODAN (Part-time)
The Rev. ILIA ORLOV
Mr. B. NELIOUBIN
Mr. P. KUTEPOV

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from :
Principal CHANDRAN, Metropolitan CHRYSOSTOMOS, Professor FAIRWEATHER,
Professor FLOROVSKY, Professor HAY, Professor MEHL, Professor MINEAR,
and Professor SCHLINK.

Opening of the Meeting

The meeting was opened with prayer by the chairman.

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held at Bad Saarow, were approved and were signed by the chairman.

Welcomes

The chairman welcomed the Rev. RUPERT DAVIES as a new member of the Working Committee. Then the chairman expressed the pleasure of the Working Committee in being able to welcome Father VITALY BOROVOI to the meeting in his new capacity as Associate Director of the Secretariat, and Pastor REINHARD GROSCURTH as a member of the Secretariat. He further recorded the thanks of the Committee to the Evangelical Church in Germany for providing Pastor Groscurth's salary for a period of two to three years.

Vacancies

Dr. VISCHER reported on recent developments which had created vacancies in the Commission and Working Committee. Principal CHANDRAN wishes to resign from the vice-chairmanship and Working Committee because of his appointment as vice-chairman of the Central Committee ; Bishop SIGG has died ; the Rev. W. J. S. FARRIS wishes to withdraw in favour of someone from the West Indies.

The chairman suggested, and it was AGREED, that Dr. TAYLOR chair a group including Bishop SARKISSIAN, Dr. SMOLIK, and Principal CHAMPION, which would suggest nominations for these vacancies and for that created by Father BOROVOI's becoming a staff member (see below, p. 20).

Staff Report

The staff report of the year's activities was ACCEPTED without discussion. (Relevant portions of it are included in the appropriate places of the following minutes.)

Staff Travels

Travel outside European countries has been confined to three journeys : Mr. RODGER spent three weeks in South America in August/September 1965, and a week in Egypt and Lebanon in January 1966, having been invited as a guest speaker to the Standing Committee of the Oriental Orthodox Churches at Cairo. Dr. VISCHER went to the USA in April/May 1966, where he delivered a number of lectures and gave the Bible studies at the meeting of the Consultation on Church Union in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Vischer and Mr. Rodger (for the concluding week only) attended the Fourth Session of the Vatican Council as WCC observers. Dr. HANDSPICKER was on leave of absence in the USA from September to December 1965 to complete his doctoral dissertation for Yale University. During Dr. Handspicker's absence the Secretariat was helped out by the Rev. WILLIAM SULLIVAN, C.S.P., to whom it is greatly indebted.

Within the next six months Dr. VISCHER will attend the EACC Faith and Order Conference at Hong Kong, 26 October — 3 November, and pay brief visits to one or two countries in East Asia ; and Dr. HANDSPICKER will visit the Middle East, India, Pakistan, and East Africa, some time in January/February 1967. A very heavy budget for meetings in 1967 is likely to curtail other travel during that year.

Revised Constitution

A further revision of the constitution was prepared, taking into account the suggestions made at the last Working Committee, and also those of Mr. Ross, Mr. Stringfellow and Professor Wingren. Dr. HANDSPICKER presented the revised version which members had received by mail. A brief discussion ensued, clarifying some points and indicating some omissions. The chairman then suggested referring the points to a sub-committee for discussion and sharpening, and this was AGREED. (For report see below p. 18.)

Finances

As indicated in the staff report, on a general budget of \$52,000 Faith and Order succeeded in underspending by about \$500 in 1965. This was a welcome achievement in view of the deficit on the Montreal Conference and the extra expenditure on the Aarhus meeting. However, a warning needs to be given that, because of the stringent financial situation of the WCC until the Fourth Assembly, extra financing for the Commission meeting in 1967 will be difficult to find. There is, however, a total of \$4,000 held in reserve for Commission meetings and some funds will be available from the Programme Projects Fund.

This Fund has been increased by a gift of \$5,000 from the USA National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. At the moment there have been designated gifts of approximately \$19,800 and authorization has been given to spend up to \$27,500. So far expenditures have been approximately \$8,300 which leaves a balance of \$19,200. So far most of the money has been used for meetings involving Orthodox and for help in establishing contacts with Pentecostals. The funds have also paid for meetings with Seventh-Day Adventists (see below, p. 17) and the travel expenses for two interpreters to assist at a meeting of African theologians held at Ibadan, Nigeria, in January 1966, on *African Response to Revelation in Christ*.

Dr. HANDSPICKER reported on the current year's finances, and mentioned the new ease in financial operations now that the IBM system was in use. Since most of the expenditures for the year occur in the summer and therefore have not yet been entered, a clear picture is not available. However, the budget should not be overspent this year, and there may again be a small underspending.

Publications

Pastor GROSCURTH reported on publications issued during the year. The following numbered papers have been published: No. 45, the minutes of the Bad Saarow meeting; No. 46, Mr. Rodger's report on Faith and Order to Central Committee, "A Wide Door and Many Adversaries"; and No. 47, Dr. Handspicker's biennial survey of church union negotiations (first published in *The Ecumenical Review*, July 1966).

Dr. Vischer's *Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement* has been published by Christian-Kaiser Verlag under the title *Die Einheit der Kirche*. The French edition is still in preparation, and a shorter Spanish edition, with a special introduction, has been undertaken by Dr. José Miguez Bonino.

The report of the study on the ministry of deaconesses in the church has been published together with papers done in the course of the study as No. 4 in the series of "World Council Studies". The title of the book is *The Deaconess: A Service of Women in the World of Today*. It is now available in English and German, with the French version due to be published next year.

Papers given at the consultation on Christian Education and Ecumenical Commitment together with the report have been published in the January 1966 issue of *RISK*, the Youth Department magazine.

Dr. Vischer's report on the Second Vatican Council (and Mr. Rodger's report separately published as Faith and Order Paper No. 46) was published in the April 1966 issue of *The Ecumenical Review*.

Study Encounter has published Professor Berkhof's paper on "God in Nature and History" both as an article and an offprint. It has also published the report of the first consultation in the Eucharist study together with two comments in Volume 2, Nos. 2 and 4.

Week of Prayer

The theme for 1966 was "I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Ez. 37 : 27). The number of leaflets distributed by National Councils and other

agencies continues to increase, not least in the USA where it was gratifying to have on the leaflet the active commendation of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. In some places, e.g. Buenos Aires, there was full Orthodox-Protestant-Roman Catholic participation in public worship for the first time.

It had been intended to have a consultation with the Roman Catholic partners in this enterprise, during March 1966. The Secretariat for Unity notified us, however, that they could not be ready by this date. A smaller meeting (at which Abbé Michalon was present *à titre personnel*) was therefore held, with the main purpose of preparing the leaflet for 1967. The theme — chosen partly in order to meet a request from the organizers of the Christian Pavilion at the 1967 World Fair in Montreal — is “Called to one hope” (Eph. 4 : 4), and the editor is Pastor Groscurth. Only one, longer, meditation is given, and a number of new prayers have been selected. Otherwise the form of the leaflet remains as before, pending a larger consultation.

Pastor GROSCURTH reported that a postponed meeting is now called for 17-20th October 1966 in Geneva. It will have on its agenda such practical questions as the date (or dates) of the observance of the Week, the distribution of material in various languages, etc. It will also discuss more deeply the theology underlying what has become one of the greatest manifestations of ecumenical longing in our day. The manuscript of an anthology of passages from Holy Scripture and the Fathers and of prayers for unity has been compiled in English only, and its publication will be considered by the consultation.

An extended discussion followed and can be summarized as follows :

A. *General Aspects*

1. The remarkable increase in the observance of the Week of Prayer is reason to be thankful. It puts, however, a lot of questions for those concerned with the preparation.
2. This *thankfulness for the unity* of the churches achieved so far should be emphasized in the leaflet. Since the beginning of the Week of Prayer the main point of departure has been the suffering over our divisions ; one should however take note of certain important progress which has been made in recent years.
3. In *style and content* we have to reckon with very simple people and with those who have observed the Week of Prayer for many years. We have to consider both ecumenical services and those held by only one church.
4. The *intercessions* should be more specific and precise. It is necessary, for example, to mention church union negotiations when they reach a critical stage. Congregations should know what is going on in the different parts of the world for their intercessions.
5. Since preparations for the Week of Prayer have to be made very early (the deadline for Geneva is usually the end of April for the following year) up-to-date information is rather difficult. The only solution to this problem seems to be an *information sheet* which could be published later (probably each autumn).
6. The forthcoming consultation should give thought to the question of which *particular aspect* should be emphasized in one year (e.g. church

union negotiations) while other problems could be stressed in another year. This could help us to avoid duplication or mentioning only generalities.

7. In order to awaken the interest of future ministers in the Week of Prayer we should try to contact *colleges and seminaries*. Their ecumenical committees could do a lot in this respect and should be helped.

B. *Local Arrangements*

1. Since the differences among regional and local situations have to be reckoned with, the development of publishing more *local adaptations* was appreciated by the members of the Working Committee.
2. These adaptations should if at all possible be made for *all in each place* (as done for instance in the German speaking countries).
3. It seems impossible to reach a *universal date* for the Week of Prayer (difficulties especially in the Southern hemisphere and in connection with the Week of Prayer of the Evangelical Alliance). This development should not be regretted. But churches should try to find a *common date in each region*. These regions should, however, not be too small.
4. *Translation* into different languages should be made available to other regions and churches. This makes early preparation a necessity.
5. If an *information sheet* is to be published it will probably need local adaptation too. The balance between local and universal information and intercession should be kept.

C. *Collection of Prayers*

It would be of great value for future preparations of the Week of Prayer to have a *collection of prayers* representing the different liturgical traditions. Furthermore such a collection could help in the following respects :

1. The prayers chosen for the Week of Prayer would be more closely connected with the normal liturgical life of the churches.
2. Pastors, etc., preparing ecumenical and normal church services would have a *source book of prayers*.
3. Commissions working on *liturgical reforms* should get material which would enable them to include ecumenical prayers in their normal liturgy.
4. A *collection of meditations* of the fathers on the unity of the Church should be added.

D. *Report of the Consultation*

The Working Committee highly appreciates the plan for the participants of the consultation to work on a report for the Joint Working Group and the respective authorities clarifying their ideas about the future of the Week of Prayer.

Studies

Unity. — Dr. VISCHER reported on the three meetings held by the sub-committee of the Working Committee which is engaged on this study. Dr. GÜNTHER WAGNER of Rüschlikon and Father JÉRÔME HAMER have been consultants to

the group. Since it was decided that the document arising from this study should be presented to the Assembly jointly by the Faith and Order Commission and the Division of World Mission and Evangelism, Bishop LESSLIE NEWBIGIN was present at the last meeting, held at Présinge. An outline and drafts of sub-sections have been prepared, and Professor MINEAR is drafting the document. After further discussion and redrafting it will be submitted to the Commission meeting in Bristol.

The main idea of the document is to progress beyond the New Delhi statement. As a focus it takes the relation of the Holy Spirit to various themes: missionary task of the church, unity on local and universal levels, unity and diversity, the unity of the church and the unity of the world, problems of continuity and discontinuity, repentance and renewal. In the ensuing discussion Professor MIGUEZ BONINO welcomed the unifying theme of the Holy Spirit, pointing to its relevance in discussions with conservative evangelicals; Professor SKYDSGAARD stressed the need for deeper theological clarification; and Dr. OUTLER that consideration be taken of the work of Vatican II in finalizing the draft.

It was then AGREED that the background papers of the study be made available to the Commission members before Bristol, and that an additional contribution from an Orthodox be secured. Included are papers by Professors Skydsgaard, Nelson, Mehl, Schlink, Minear and Dr. Vischer.

Creation, New Creation and the Unity of the Church. — Dr. VISCHER reported that the working paper by Professor Berkhof has been widely distributed and replies from individuals have already been received. About ten groups have promised to send in reports, and there will be a consultation in March 1967 at which these will be discussed and after which 1) Professor Berkhof will revise his paper, and 2) plans for furthering the study will be made as recommendations to the Commission.

Discussion centred around the problem of arousing the interest of natural scientists and historians in such a study, and on the importance of this study for Faith and Order in the light of current theological discussion, disenchantment on the part of some with what they term "abstract" theological discussion, and the mandate received from the Montreal Conference to engage in such a study.

Professor SITTLER reported polite disinterest met his efforts to gather a group but Professor SMOLIK reported a good response. He pointed out, however, that so far their group is mainly composed of theologians but they hoped to discuss the question with non-Christians as well. Dr. HANDSPICKER mentioned the comment made by Professor Hindmarsh with regard to the Berkhof paper that one basic obstacle to dialogue is not terminology but methodology — Hindmarsh thinks theologians are deeply affected by their philological training and are not used to the tentative way in which scientists use their conceptual models.

At this point Professor McCAUGHEY expressed his conviction that this study gets at a central problem with regard to the understanding of technology and of revolutionary process. As a result it merits a high priority, for it demands an inter-disciplinary approach. He observed that theological work, because it has not taken seriously the history of science, and the work of people like Polanyi, has serious limitations in this area of study.

In the light of the discussion to this point the chairman requested members to submit names of people whom the members believed should be asked to comment on the study, and suggested that the consultation next spring should draw representation from the various groups which are already engaged in the study. Professor PERSSON pointed to the lack of Orthodox participation so far, and Dr. VISCHER reported that every effort had been made to secure this, and that the Secretariat would continue to try to involve Orthodox theologians in the work.

Further discussion centred on the future of the study. Professor SKYDSGAARD stressed that the study must be discussed at the next Assembly. But Professor OUTLER remarked that if this is to be done Faith and Order must be sure to be good, or else it should wait. Even since Montreal this question has become more important and yet more diffuse. Principal CHAMPION then suggested that an attempt be made to break the study down into parts, to make it more manageable. He observed that Faith and Order is being challenged to tackle the meaning of the revolution through which men are living, and thought that a concentration on history would be advised, rather than attempting to deal with the work of God in both nature and history. Dr. SLENCZKA then queried whether even then adequate resources were available to do a good job in the next two years, particularly if the study is to have an apologetic side.

The chairman then summarized the feeling of the committee by saying that it seemed they wished to say 1) that the study is essential for Faith and Order, 2) that further work should include participation by Orthodox and Roman Catholic scholars, and 3) that at least an interim report should be ready for the Assembly. In the light of this high priority should be given to the consultation to be held next spring, and the work of the Secretariat should be planned so as to take this into consideration. Dr. VISCHER then observed that even this might not be sufficient, for not only does this study bear an integral relationship to the question of Church unity, it also has a relationship to other work going on in the Division of Studies. This raises the question of breaking through organizational separation of issues such as this, and therefore the question of relationships within the Division itself.

Professor OUTLER and Dr. TAYLOR both pointed out that twenty-five years ago Faith and Order was breaking new ground in theology; and that such a task is still its job. The committee AGREED that in order to continue to fulfil its role properly intensive work in the area of this study needed to be pursued even more vigorously. The chairman then directed that a minute be drawn up by Professor OUTLER and Dr. VISCHER. This was subsequently approved by the committee and reads as follows:

Having heard and discussed a staff report on the current progress of the study-programme on "Creation, New Creation and the Unity of the Church", the Working Committee agreed upon the following:

1. A word of hearty appreciation to Professor H. Berkhof for his significant contributions to this study-programme.
2. A reaffirmation of its conviction of the prime importance of this general topic in the ongoing work of Faith and Order. Although its bearing upon the problems of unity is indirect, it is demonstrably relevant to them, because it is now clear that the analysis of the deeper levels of

theological disagreement is indispensable to any direct approach to unity and unity negotiations.

3. A commendation of the plans for a consultation in the spring of 1967, to review the study programme thus far and to forward the preparation of a text for discussion in the Commission meeting at Bristol.
4. A direction to the Faith and Order Secretariat to insure adequate supervision for this study, including appropriate provision for meetings, circulation of papers, etc.
5. A suggestion that this study programme be taken as an occasion for further examinations of the working relations between Faith and Order and other departments in the Division of Studies, especially the Department on Church and Society, looking toward greater mutual reinforcement of their several study-projects.

The Eucharist : a Sacrament of Unity. — Father BOROVoi reported on the consultation which had been held at Grandchamp and organized by Patrick Rodger soon after the last Working Committee meeting. Discussion had centred on a paper by Professor von Allmen, and it became clear that central to future work will be a discussion of the relation between eucharist, ministry and congregation. The report of the consultation had been sent to all participants and also to regional study groups in several parts of the world. The next step is the preparation of a consultation which will be held April 3-8, 1967 at Crêt-Bérard. This group will prepare a report for the Commission. Professor von Allmen's paper will be available in French by the beginning of next year from Delachaux and Niestlé. The report and some reactions to it are available in *Study Encounter*, Vol. 2, Nos. 2 and 4.

Dr. TAYLOR added comments as chairman of the consultation, and spoke particularly about the need 1) to think of the eucharist in relation to the Church's witness in the world, and 2) to give some attention to the problem of eucharistic discipline as this is faced by younger churches. Dr. CHITESCU mentioned the problem of intercommunion, and made particular reference to Anglican-Orthodox relationships. After some discussion of the matter Father BOROVoi pointed out that the study centres on an attempt to establish a theological basis for agreement on the eucharist ; then the churches themselves can deal with the question of intercommunion.

Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Ministry. — This study was begun at a small consultation meeting at Présinge in 1964. However, the study guide produced there has not proved sufficiently focused to elicit good discussion, Dr. HANDSPICKER reported. Two other papers have been requested, one by Professor Robert Paul and one by Frère Max Thurian ; these may help provide more material for discussion. However, the main problem has been groups. So far the only group really active is a double-barrelled Australasian one meeting in Melbourne and Dunedin.

Professor PERSSON expressed disappointment at such a poor result, and asked whether the responsibility for the study should not be vested in a theological commission. Professor MIGUEZ BONINO reported that in fact a group working in the River Plate area had picked up the study, but pointed to language difficulties ; Professor OUTLER called for closer contact with church union work, particularly with the Consultation on Church Union in the United States. Mr. DAVIES

raised the possibility of bringing this question up either at the meeting on church union negotiations planned for next spring (see below, p. 16) or at the Commission meeting itself.

In conclusion the Committee pointed to the large number of studies currently under way in Faith and Order, and also to the lack of sufficient finances. Professor McCaughey observed that even regional groups need money, and can work more quickly when adequately financed. It was AGREED to attempt to solicit more responses from regional groups, to draw up a paper descriptive of the ministry in union negotiations, and to evaluate available material for a report to the Commission.

Spirit, Order and Organization. — Dr. HANDSPICKER reported that this study has already had exciting results in the discussions at two consultations (August 1965 and 1966) among theologians, historians and sociologists. Last year conceptual schemes were worked out to guide the study of protest movements in the church and reunion movements. So far about ten studies are under way or completed, but many more, and more varied ones historically and geographically, are needed. This year's group looked particularly at the problems of research, and recommended that either sufficient financing (between \$20,000 and \$25,000) be secured for empirical research or that the study be dropped. They are sure that the study is intrinsically interesting sociologically, that comparative studies can be done, and that the conceptual schemes will enable valid generalizations to be made. After sufficient studies have been done a consultation would be called to draft a final report ; members hope that in the interim theological reflection can go on as well.

Principal CHAMPION observed that the study is intended to examine organized forms of church life to see in what ways they are, or are not, signs of the activity of the Holy Spirit. In this way it is hoped to break through some of the problems one confronts when attempting to discuss "order" directly. He noted that this means that once the empirical method has been pushed to its limits, the data gathered demand theological evaluation and reflection.

Dr. SLENCZKA questioned whether the method being used were appropriate. He noted that the Church is spiritual, formed by a will to obedience, and that such a reality is not open to empirical investigation. He therefore felt that a project such as this was not really within the realm of Faith and Order studies.

Dr. HANDSPICKER pointed out that in the language of sociological analysis theology would be termed ideology — such a designation would be viewed by theologians as having pejorative implications. However, for the sociologist it is merely the designation of the function theology actually fulfils in a group. The sociologists would be the first to insist that their only task is to point out how theology functions in a situation ; the questions of true and false from a theological point of view are not within their competence. But the theologians in the consultation were convinced that precisely such an analysis is needed so that they could see how, for example, the understanding of order actually operates in the life of the church. It is in discovering the answer to *this* question the present method is useful. In the light of such discoveries the theological question then can be raised with regard to definite empirical knowledge.

The chairman closed the discussion by expressing the conviction of the committee that if finances can be secured this interdisciplinary study should certainly be continued.

Significance of Early Councils for the Ecumenical Movement. — Dr. VISCHER reported on this study, carried out by a group which was half Western and half from the Orthodox and pre-Chalcedonian churches. The report itself should be ready by the beginning of the year. It will consist of five chapters. The first deals with conciliarity as an essential element in the life of the church, and as manifested in different ways at different levels (from local and synodal to ecumenical). The second discusses the councils and the unity of the church: in what ways were councils and synods connected with the problems of unity; in what way is the Eucharistic fellowship of the churches related to conciliar life? In the third chapter the pattern of councils is treated. The fourth chapter deals with the authority and impact of a council. The council proves its authority by its reception in the church; and this reception is twofold — initially and anew in each generation. A fifth chapter deals with conciliarity and the Church today. This concludes that a council can take place only in the context of the unity of the church; this provides some insight into the ecclesiological function of the ecumenical movement: it can be understood as preparation for the moment at which an ecumenical council could take place.

The chairman remarked on the inherent interest of such a document, and it was AGREED that the members of the Working Committee should receive it as soon as possible. It was further AGREED that the document should be among those sent out in preparation for the Faith and Order Commission meeting.

Further discussion ensued. Professor SKYDSGAARD mentioned another kind of reception developed in the Reformed tradition: by humility and love, i.e. received even in disagreement until another council has taken place to correct the results. Professor NELSON expressed the desire that free-church theologians also be consulted in regard to the document. Professor OUTLER asked whether any case studies were used in its preparation, i.e. of various crisis situations in different times and areas. Dr. VISCHER remarked that the study proceeded on the basis of extensive historical research, but not particularly case studies, and that this document is itself still only a basis for further study. At best provisional conclusions can be drawn, and these might indicate which further areas (or cases) should be studied.

Patristic Study Group. — Formed in 1962, Dr. VISCHER reported that this group would be finished with its work this year. It has examined in detail St. Basil's treatise on the Holy Spirit. Its purpose has been to establish some hermeneutical principles for work in patristics. The papers and report should be published in the future. The main conclusion of both this group and the group studying the Councils was that their efforts be merged and continue as a study of one particular council — examining to what extent it was received and to what extent it is received by the church today.

Hermeneutics. — A consultation held at Bad Schauenburg in 1964 initiated this study, Dr. VISCHER said, which is being carried out on behalf of the Division of Studies. Its first report is contained in the Aarhus Minutes (Faith and Order Paper No. 44, pp. 61 ff.). Regional groups have since been formed under the supervision of Professor E. Dinkler: two in the United States and three in Europe. The former are led by Professors Wilder and Harrelson, the latter by Professors Nineham, Berkhof and Bonnard. Members of these groups will be meeting next spring to prepare a report, on the basis of their exegetical work together, for presentation to the Commission and the Divisional Committee.

The Church and the Jewish People. — Dr. VISCHER reported that the report drafted in 1964 had since been circulated to a number of individuals and groups. About twenty-five substantial comments have been received and collated. These, together with the original report, will be considered by a consultation to be held this fall under the joint sponsorship of Faith and Order and DWME's Department on the Church and the Jewish People.

Christian Education and Ecumenical Commitment. — Based upon mandates issued to the Youth Department in 1961 and Faith and Order in 1963, Dr. HANDSPICKER reported that the study is proceeding under the joint sponsorship of these departments and the World Council of Christian Education. The report of the first consultation, together with background papers, has been published in RISK, January 1966, and some of the papers have been reprinted in the *Journal of Religious Education*. The report has also been separately circulated, and is translated into Spanish for circulation in Latin America. Numerous groups and individuals have been studying the report, and already a fair number have replied with detailed criticisms. A consultation will be held at Boldern, near Zürich, in March and the final report will be prepared at that time. This will be submitted to the Commission, and also to the Committees of the Youth Department and the WCCE. No revision will be possible, but comments can be made for inclusion in the final published version. If the report is approved by these groups it will be sent directly to religious education boards, professors of religious education, and others in the churches responsible for educational work. This specific address of the report, it is hoped, will be more effective than merely referring it to the churches for "study and appropriate action".

The Ministry of Deaconesses. — The publication already referred to under PUBLICATIONS contains the report of a consultation on "The office of deaconess in the church". It is not proposed to hold any further meetings, but it should be noted that a desk for Diakonia is to be set up within the Division of Inter-Church Aid. It will be necessary to bring into relation with one another the various studies done under the aegis of the WCC on the diaconal ministry of the Church.

Lutheran-Reformed Conversations. — The annual meeting was held at Bad Schauenburg in April 1966, and the minutes are available. The subject was "Confessions and the Church". The theme for 1967 is "The Limits of the Church" (*Grenzen der Kirche*). It is hoped that the group will be able to publish its findings next year.

The Date of Easter. — A questionnaire sent out by the Faith and Order Secretariat to WCC member churches has elicited 74 replies. Of these, the greater number, namely 62, showed a preference for the proposal to fix the Sunday after the second Saturday in April as Easter for all Christians. (Only one letter was clearly negative on this point.) A second mailing has been made to those churches which have not yet replied.

Commission Meeting

The chairman, the Bishop of Bristol, extended his welcome to the city of Bristol and commented that we should be well received, having three Bristolians on the Working Committee. Already Dr. CHAMPION had secured St. Matthias

Church teachers' training college for the meeting, and Mr. DAVIES has been arranging events in connection with the Bristol Council of Churches. The booking had been tentatively made from July 31st to August 11th. However, there has been some question about dates. Dr. VISCHER reported that because of Central Committee plans (16-27 August), Executive Committee (13-15 August), 'scrambled groups' for Assembly documents (10-12 August), and Divisional Committees (4-8 August), the Commission will be forced to move the dates of its meeting back. It would seem that the nearest possible dates would be 28th July to 8th August.

Displeasure was expressed by a number of the committee members because of the necessity of moving the dates. It was decided to ask the chairman to write a letter expressing the concern of the committee that in the future dates which have been set well in advance be honoured, since otherwise any advance planning is useless.

After some discussion the following schedule was AGREED upon: Working Committee arrive evening of the 28th, meet the 29th when other Commission members arrive. The first Sunday would have worship services and an introduction to the programme in the afternoon. Then begin full work on Monday, working through Saturday noon. The next Sunday will be free and the meeting will close with a service on the evening of the 8th. Commission members will depart on the 9th, and there will be a Working Committee meeting in the morning of that day.

Dr. VISCHER then proposed that the Commission meeting have five sections with a possible sixth if the unity group decides it should continue to work during that time. The following would be the division of work:

- I. Creation, New Creation and the Unity of the Church
- II. Study on the Eucharist
- III. Spirit, Order and Organization; Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Ministry; Church Union matters
- IV. Tradition and Traditions: Hermeneutics; Patristic Study Group; Councils of the Early Church
- V. General Faith and Order problems; Relations with non-member churches (including Roman Catholic Church).

The texts discussed by the sections would be of different types. Some would be for transmission to the Assembly, others for direct transmission to the churches or their agencies, and still others would be interim reports on which the Commission must pass with regard to the next stages of the studies.

A further suggestion by Dr. VISCHER mentioned the possibility of inviting consultants for the various sections. Professor NELSON suggested that certainly Professor BERKHOF should be there to advise concerning section I. After further discussion it was AGREED that the Secretariat be given the discretion to invite such people. The chairman also suggested that the invitation of observers be left to the Secretariat and this was also AGREED.

In a discussion of worship at the commission meeting the chairman suggested the following concerning major services, after there had been a thorough discussion by the committee: that there be an Orthodox liturgy on the first Sunday morning, and a public cathedral service with open communion on Sunday evening. On

the second Sunday there would be free-church worship, and the closing service would be Anglican communion. Further discussion concerned worship during the Commission meeting itself. Professor NELSON then suggested, and it was AGREED, that the Chairman together with Principal CHAMPION and Mr. DAVIES be appointed a sub-committee on worship to make local arrangements.

Roman Catholic Relationships

Dr. VISCHER reported on the work of the Joint Working Group. He noted that the most important proposal for Faith and Order was that a theological commission be established between the Secretariat for Unity and the Faith and Order Commission. The Central Committee has accepted this proposal and the Joint Working Group is now working on the question of a subject or subjects for discussion, a structure for such a commission, and the question of adequate representation of the spectrum of churches making up the World Council.

Dr. VISCHER then invited a discussion on Roman Catholic participation in future Faith and Order work. A variety of opinions was expressed on this matter in the discussion which ensued.

Joint Theological Commission

The chairman requested that the committee engage in further discussion of the plans for a joint Theological Commission with the Secretariat for Unity. Dr. VISCHER reported that it had been tentatively agreed to have seven representatives from the WCC and five from the Roman Catholic Church. The initial topic to be discussed would be "Catholicity and Apostolicity". Father BOROVoi noted that the major requirement for participation would be excellence in scholarship rather than confessional background.

Bishop SARKISSIAN and Professor OUTLER both requested a very clear focus to be given to the study, and that representatives of various traditions in the WCC participate in commenting on both the idea of catholicity and that of apostolicity.

Membership of the WCC group was then discussed. It was suggested that Professor MINEAR might be requested to chair the group, and the committee AGREED to offer him an invitation to do so. The Chairman then suggested that for other members the Director be asked to draw up a list of suggestions and that the officers be empowered to select the members. It was so AGREED.

Fourth Assembly

The chairman asked Dr. VISCHER to introduce this item, and he began by pointing to the particular responsibility Faith and Order has, with the co-operation of DWME, for preparing a document which would be considered by Section I — tentative title, "The Church's Unity in a Shrinking World". Such a document would grow out of the unity study group, and this is in line with the decision that the Assembly should reflect the ongoing work of the Council and not be

specially prepared. This does not mean that Faith and Order participation is limited to Section I, and certainly the work on the Eucharist needs to be fed into the preparation for Section V — “The Worship of God in a Secular Age”.

Professor PERSSON expressed the concern that the unity document issuing from the Faith and Order Commission not be changed or rewritten by another group. Dr. VISCHER pointed out that joint responsibility with DWME had been secured through Bishop Newbigin’s participation in the drafting. Such co-operation would continue and the comments of people from DWME would be secured before the Commission meeting. This should mean that the document need not later be revised.

A lengthy discussion then took place with particular emphasis upon the need to communicate the fact that Faith and Order concern with unity is not abstract, but due to the need for unity in the missionary witness of the Church. Professors SKYDSGAARD and SITTLER both stressed the need for seeking new ways of communicating with the younger generation of churchmen and those engaged in new forms of ministry. The chairman summarized the discussion and commented that these concerns should be taken up by the drafters of the document for Section I, and that perhaps at Bristol discussion could continue, particularly concerning the relationship between the “Creation, New Creation” study and the unity study.

Further discussion about plans for the Assembly centred on the question of the Faith and Order Committee of the Assembly. Professor NELSON observed that the Committee at New Delhi found it difficult to survey the whole field of Faith and Order work. But Bishop SARKISSIAN noted that the task of the Assembly is to do just this, and to pass on recommendations for each department’s work for the next period. The chairman asked if the question were not really what focus the Committee could have for its discussions. Dr. VISCHER agreed, and noted that the pattern of committee supervision varies with departments; the situation of Faith and Order is made complex by virtue of the peculiar place held by the Commission. The chairman then suggested that, since the Assembly is taking place so soon after a full Commission meeting, the report of the Commission be submitted basically just for acceptance, and that a rather full discussion takes place on the relation of Faith and Order to non-member churches.

Dr. VISCHER then observed that if this were done many questions directly connected with policy could receive thorough discussion. It would then be possible to make well-founded recommendations to a Policy Reference Committee. It was AGREED that the procedure outlined by the chairman be recommended.

Church Union Negotiations

Attention was called to the survey published in the July issue of *The Ecumenical Review*, and Dr. HANDSPICKER announced that it would as usual be published separately as a Faith and Order Paper (No. 47). He noted the disappointing hold-up of union in Nigeria, and pointed to the very hopeful progress made in Ghana, Ceylon and New Zealand, and to the increasing number of union negotiations as such, and the increasing percentage of interconfessional negotiations.

Mr. DAVIES reported on the work of a new Commission on Anglican/Methodist union in England. It hopes to produce an interim report in March giving a

new service of reconciliation. The chairman reported on the progress in Great Britain concerning "covenanting for union" in response to the resolutions of the Nottingham Faith and Order Conference of 1964. Already conversations are fairly well advanced in Wales and Scotland, and an initial meeting of delegates from the churches is to take place in England on September 28th. Professor OUTLER pointed to the crucial decision facing the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren Churches in 1968. This he felt would be a key to future participation of the Methodists in the Consultation on Church Union.

Attention was then turned to a discussion of the consultation on church union negotiations planned by the Secretariat for 9-16 April, 1967. Dr. VISCHER noted that this had been called for by the last Commission meeting, and that a special grant from the Evangelical Church of the Union has made possible participation from all over the world. So far no church has refused to send a representative, and in general responses to the invitations are good. Particular issues such as Christian initiation, ministry and laity, and the confession of faith will be taken up; but one main problem to be discussed is the relation of united churches to one another. Thus the question of the relation between local and universal unity will be approached from this particular angle.

Orthodox and Non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Meeting

Committee members were reminded of the meeting which had taken place between representatives of these churches immediately prior to the Aarhus Commission meeting. The report of the meeting and some papers were published in English and a Russian translation has been made. Dr. VISCHER reported that the response to the meeting was encouraging and some participants had expressed a desire that another meeting take place prior to the next Commission meeting. It was AGREED to authorize staff to help organize such a meeting if it is desired by the groups concerned.

Relations with Conservative Evangelicals

Dr. HANDSPICKER commented that in the last two or three years Faith and Order has been moving ahead rather rapidly in contacts with Roman Catholics, and also in securing increased participation of Orthodox theologians in various studies. However, the Secretariat has increasingly been concerned to secure participation in its work both from the conservative evangelical element in the WCC constituency and from non-member churches of a conservative theological position.

He reported that recent developments had included two consultations with Seventh-Day Adventists, with plans for another one. Out of this work together arose the idea of essays on non-member churches to inform the WCC constituency; and one requirement for such essays would be that they be accepted as fairly picturing the church by competent representatives of those churches. As a result such an essay on Adventists, a draft on Pentecostals in Europe, and an essay on Southern Baptists have already been prepared. One or two other such essays might be able to be ready in time for publication in the January issue of *The*

Ecumenical Review, and they would be reprinted as a Faith and Order numbered paper. The articles will be unsigned due to their multiple authorship in each instance.

Other developments include the formation of a working party to deal with conservative evangelical questions, a decision to include their concerns in preparation for and in the Assembly, a trip by Dr. Hollenweger to the United States during which he established personal contact with a number of Pentecostal Churches, and a consultation which is planned for October with European Pentecostals in Gunten, Switzerland. Regional meetings similar to those held in Bossey are also to be arranged. Plans are underway for one in England, and Dr. Eugene Smith has been exploring possibilities in the United States.

In the discussion which followed Mr. NORGREN reported on the conversations which have been going on for four years between the Assemblies of God and the Episcopal Church in the United States. Principal CHAMPION expressed the desire that we discover ways of overcoming the stereotypes which are held in evangelical circles of the ecumenical movement and the World Council, and similar stereotypes held of evangelicals. Both Principal CHAMPION and Mr. DAVIES called attention to increasing tension within some of the member churches and the need to be concerned with this.

Amendments to Constitution

Dr. TAYLOR reported from the sub-committee on amendments, and the Chairman proposed that these be accepted for submission to the Commission. It was so AGREED. Copies of a version incorporating these amendments will be sent to members of the Commission.

Faith and Order and World Confessional Organizations

A memorandum entitled "The Place and Task of Confessional Families in the Ecumenical Movement" had been prepared for the committee by Dr. VISCHER. In discussing this memorandum the following points were made. First, it was AGREED that the theological secretaries of the world confessional bodies be invited as observers at Faith and Order Commission meetings. Secondly, that already developments in Methodist, Reformed, Baptist, Anglican and Lutheran circles point to the need for co-ordination of work and also to the need for reflection on the ecumenical function of such bodies. Thirdly, the committee AGREED that Dr. Vischer's paper should be published and made widely available after he has a chance to discuss it this fall with representatives of these bodies. Fourthly, that the heart of Dr. Vischer's paper is in the proposal to co-ordinate studies carried on by the confessional bodies and the World Council in such a way that there is a real division of labour, and also that there is the possibility of creating a common consciousness on an ecumenical rather than merely confessional level. Finally, it was AGREED that the question of Faith and Order's relationship to these bodies should be discussed at the consultation on union negotiations in April and at the Commission meeting.

Nominations

Dr. TAYLOR presented the following report from the nominations sub-committee :

1. Professor M. MOUDJUGIN, Russian Orthodox, USSR, to replace Father Borovoi on the Commission ;
2. Bishop HAROLD DE SOYSA, Anglican, Ceylon, to replace Principal Chandran on the Working Committee ;
3. Professor EARLE HILGERT, Seventh-Day Adventist, United States, to replace Bishop Sigg on the Commission.

These nominations were unanimously approved by the Working Committee, and shall be voted upon by the Commission for recommendation to the Central Committee. The sub-committee recommended that the other vacancies be left for the moment, and that nominations for them be taken up after a review of the geographical and confessional balance of the Commission. The committee AGREED with this recommendation, and requested the sub-committee to continue its work and to report to the next meeting.

Research Consultants

The question of consultants to the Secretariat was raised by the Chairman and discussed in some detail. The Committee authorized the Secretariat to explore this matter further and to bring suggestions to the Bristol meeting.

European Faith and Order Conference

Dr. VISCHER reported that a proposal has been made by the German *Ökumenischer Ausschuss* that a European conference on Faith and Order be called, possibly for 1970. This proposal arises out of the feeling that co-operation among the churches in Europe has not yet been sufficiently concerned with theological issues. A brief discussion followed, and the committee was agreed that more details were needed before an intelligent response could be made to the question. Staff was therefore requested to prepare a memorandum for discussion at the next committee meeting.

Closing Actions

The Chairman, the Bishop of Bristol, expressed the deep thanks of the Working Committee and staff to their hosts, the Rector of the Academy and the Abbot and monks of the Lavra of St. Sergius, for the friendly, efficient, and warm hospitality extended to them. He mentioned in particular the privilege all felt in being able to participate in the liturgies over the Feast of the Dormition, and to be able to live even for a few days in a place so important in the religious and national history of the Russian people. He thanked the interpreters for their assistance and their readiness to help in many ways. The chairman then closed the meeting with prayer and a benediction.

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